

Message Text

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43

ACTION L-03

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----- 010830

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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4752

UNCLAS KATHMANDU 1545

L/EB FOR TRIMBLE

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: CASC, NP

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL MOUNT EVEREST EXPEDITION

1. MOUNTAIN TRAVEL URGENTLY NEEDS YOUR TELEGRAPHIC ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR SERVICES AS STATED IN REED'S LETTER TO YOU. FISCHER STRONGLY ADVISES YOU ACCEPT TERMS.

2. EXPEDITION SHOULD SEND LETTER ADDRESSED TO PANDE, MFA, ON LETTERHEAD AUTHORIZING MIKE CHENEY AND DAVID FISCHER TO ACT ON EXPEDITION'S BEHALF IN NEPAL. SECOND LETTER ADDRESSED TO NEPAL BANK LTD. IS REQUIRED REQUESTING ACCOUNT BE OPENED IN EXPEDITION'S NAME WITH CHENEY AND FISCHER AUTHORIZED TO ACT AS AGENTS AS REQUIRED.

3. FISCHER HAS RECENTLY DISCUSSED PLANS WITH TONY STREATHER, LEADER OF CURRENT BRITISH-NEPALESE EFFORT, WHO INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO SELL SURPLUS EQUIPMENT INCLUDING ICEFALL LADDERS, LOW ALTITUDE RATIONS AND OXYGEN (IF AVAILABLE.) SUGGEST YOU DRAW UP LIST OF WHAT, IF ANY, EQUIPMENT YOU WOULD BE WILLING TO BUT, KNOWING HOWEVER THAT IT MAY NOT BE SURPLUS.

4. AS EXPLAINED IN FISCHER'S LETTER OF APRIL 5 EXPEDITION SHOULD ENDEAVOR TO GET ANY AND ALL EQUIPMENT HERE BEFORE MONSOON CLOSES LAKLA AIRPORT, SINCE IT IS FAR CHEAPER TO AIRFREIGHT TO LUKLA THAN CARRY BY PORTER FROM KATHMANDU. CHENEY WILL PROCEED AND PURCHASE RICE, SUGAR AND LOCAL FOODSTUFFS TO BE SENT
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TO KHUMBU IN EARLY

MAY, ASSUMING YOU AGREE. MOUNTAIN TRAVEL IS TRYING TO PROCURE SOME OXYGEN LOCALLY BUT PRICE MAY BE HIGH. WHAT IS MAXIMUM EXPEDITION WILLING TO PAY FOR STANDARD BOTTLE FILLED TO 3000 PSI? YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT SHIPMENT OF OXYGEN BY AIR WILL BE DIFFICULT, SINCE INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS NORMALLY PROHIBIT CARRYING OXYGEN ON PASSENGER AIRCRAFT AND THERE ARE NO FREIGHT FLIGHTS TO KATHMANDU. IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO AIRFREIGHT TO NEW DELHI TO BE TRUCKED TO KATHMANDU. CHENEY BELIEVES IT TOO LATE TO COUNT ON OCEAN FREIGHT VIA CALCUTTA.

5. PASANG KAME HAS AGREED TO SERVE AS EXPEDITION'S CHIEF SARDHAR AND WOULD ACT AS BASE CAMP MANAGER TO BE ASSISTED, IF NECESSARY, BY OTHERS. ANG PERBA TO ACT AS CLIMBING SARDHAR RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL PORTERS AND SHERPAS ABOVE BASE CAMP. COL. ROBERTS ESTIMATES EXPEDITION WILL REQUIRE APPROXIMATELY 20 SHERPAS THROUGH AND ABOVE ICEFALL, BUT IN ADDITION YOU SHOULD COUNT ON 2 COOKS, 2 KITCHEN ASSISTANTS, AND 4-6 MAIL RUNNERS. IS THIS IN LINE WITH YOUR ESTIMATES? CHENEY WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY REPLY TO HIS SUGGESTION OF INITIAL PUSH THROUGH THE ICEFALL TO ESTABLISH BASE CAMP ABOVE 20,000, SINCE EXPEDITION'S PLAN IS IMPORTANT IN DETERMINATION OF SHERPA REQUIREMENTS.

6. CHENEY WILL FORWARD BOOT REQUIREMENTS FOR SHERPAS BUT SUGGESTS YOU PURCHASE ALL BOOTS IN US, DIVIDED ROUGHLY BETWEEN SIZES 7 1/2 AND 8 WITH SOME SIZE 9 TO COVER THAT CONTINGENCY.

7 . ADVISE.
EAVES

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